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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3984
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU PRIORITY
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RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/425ABS IZMIR TU//CC// PRIORITY
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 002517

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [TU](#) [US](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: TURKS DETERMINED TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT ARMENIAN
GENOCIDE RESOLUTION AS IT MOVES TO THE HOUSE FLOOR

REF: A. ANKARA 2500

[1](#)B. ANKARA 2509

[1](#)C. ANKARA 2510

[1](#)D. ANKARA 2504

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: Initial GOT reaction to the House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) October 10 decision to send Resolution 106 - the Armenian genocide resolution (AGR) - to the House floor reflects disappointment and anger, as well as appreciation for US Administration efforts and determination to continue to fight the measure in the full House. End summary.

[1](#)2. (U) PM Erdogan, in a CNN-Turk interview prior to the HFAC vote, recognized the scope of Administration efforts and the need to take a reasoned, long-term approach; the US was a democracy and no one could guarantee the outcome. He noted that if it passed, the measure would serve only the Armenian diaspora, not the interests of the country of Armenia. In the immediate aftermath of the HFAC vote, President Gul said, "Unfortunately, some politicians in the US turned a deaf ear to calls for common sense and once again attempted to sacrifice major issues for small domestic matters. This is not a stance that befits the representatives of a major power such as the United States of America."

[1](#)3. (U) The MFA issued a formal statement in the name of the GOT, stating its regret and condemning the HFAC decision. "It is not possible to accept that the Turkish nation is accused of a crime it never committed." The statement refers to HFAC action as "irresponsible," placing the strategic relationship on delicate, difficult footing, and adds that it is the job of historians, not legislative bodies, to evaluate history. It notes the Turkish proposal to examine their history jointly with Armenians, which Armenia has not accepted. It recognizes efforts by the highest levels of the US Administration to defeat the measure, and expresses determination to continue to combat it in the full House. It concludes, "It is very clear that an historic responsibility falls on all members of the House of Representatives and especially on the Speaker of the House."

14. (U) The print press carry the story in banner headlines. Some refer to the HFAC as bowing to the pressure of lobbyists, and sacrificing relations with an important ally in a troubled region for a few domestic votes. As the country embarks on a 4-day post-Ramadan holiday, it is a lead story on television and radio.

15. (U) "Ask the Ambassador" on the Embassy's website has received 50 entries since the HFAC vote, with anger the predominant tone. One said, "Shame on you. You say you are our ally and you stab us in the back. This is not humanity."

Another message from the central Anatolian city of Kayseri appeared 32 times; its gist: "Don't consider Kayseri, a city that has been an engine of Turkish-US ties, as your future partner from now on." A sheaf of 71 faxes of similar tone arrived in the Embassy's political section.

16. (U) The HFAC vote coincides with heightened public concern over the PKK terrorist threat, for which the US also receives public blame, due to PKK safe havens in northern Iraq. In the wake of unusually high casualties over the past 10 days and an October 9 GOT Counter-Terrorism Council meeting, PM Erdogan announced in measured tones during an October 10 CNN-Turk interview that his government would submit to parliament a motion authorizing a cross-border operation into Iraq. He stressed that all such operations in the past have failed to achieve the desired results; conditions in the region must be considered as well. He said he would use the November 3 Iraq Neighbors Ministerial in Istanbul to consult on the matter, as well as his upcoming Oval Office visit. He stated that the authorization would be open-ended and valid for one year.

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17. (SBU) As of 1300 local October 11, there has been no change that we can determine in the Turkish Armed Forces' security posture in southeastern Turkey, which continues at a high counter-terrorism ops tempo (ref C). There was no unusual military activity reported in or around Silopi or at the Habur Gate road. Commercial truck traffic from Turkey into Iraq was reported at normal levels, with 595 trucks crossing the border in the past 24 hours. A visit by the local Turkish Special Forces commander for a meeting with his US counterpart inside Iraq was proceeding as planned on October 11. However, Turkish Naval Forces Commander Admiral Atac canceled his participation in a US Chief of Naval Operations-sponsored international sea symposium.

18. (U) The Mission's security situation appears stable. There were small demonstrations in Ankara, Istanbul and Adana October 10 prior to HFAC passage of the measures, as well as a small-scale follow-on demonstration in Ankara October 11. Police support was thorough and we expect it to continue. The long holiday weekend will temporarily lower our profile.

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